



THE RETORT COURTEOUS.

(A Reminiscence of the Past Harrier Season.)

Major Tophnot, M.H. (to butcher's boy). "Hi! HULLOAH! HAVE YOU SEEN MY HARK?"
Butcher's Boy. "GA-A-RN! 'AVE YOU SEEN MY WHISKERS?"

THE TATE-À-TATE GALLERY.

It has been suggested recently in one of the papers that the National Gallery is becoming more a rendezvous for engaged, or would-be engaged, couples than a haunt of the earnest student of the Old Masters. If this is the case—and with the weather we have been having it would not cause surprise—so pressing a matter had better be regularised without delay. We beg therefore, with all diffidence, to call the attention of the Director, Sir EDWARD POYNTER, to the following more or less needful improvements:—

As the rooms are now inconveniently large, they should be partitioned off by a number of screens. This would ensure at least partial privacy, and provide "cosy corners," of course under due supervision, to advanced students. Each compartment would be supplied with easy chairs, tea table, mistletoe-bough, and other necessities.

The staff of attendants should be adequately increased by the enrolment of Stewards and Masters of Ceremonies, well versed in Leap-Year, Covent Garden, Smart Set, and Bank Holiday etiquette.

The staircases should be multiplied, as many members of suburban dancing clubs are accustomed to such accommodation, and use no other, for sitting-out.

The lighting should be more subdued, if possible, than at present, with the exception, perhaps, of one fairly well-lit chamber for beginners.

The majority of the pictures should be turned with their faces to the wall, or removed altogether, as they are productive of suicidal melancholy, or, at any rate, induce a headache and a desire to go home forthwith. They might be replaced by the idyllic and Early-Victorian love-scenes so frequently depicted by a well-known R.A., or else by a series of the most cheerful and popular post-cards. A few of the more presentable

portraits, such as those of Lady HAMILTON or the Parson's Daughter, might be retained, unless it is considered that they would lead to invidious comparisons, in appearance and behaviour, with young ladies of the present day.

To ensure the strictest propriety, admission should be by Season Ticket in the case of those whose addresses can be traced in the Court Directories, and by Ticket-of-Leave in the case of others. Such tickets to be revocable by the Department of the London County Council.

Only students and visitors between the ages of seventeen and fifty-in-the-shade should be allowed to enter, and no devotee of art permitted to encumber the rooms with easels and such-like painting apparatus.

Lastly, the Institution should be renamed the "Tate-à-Tate Gallery," a similarly-named building at Millbank being available for life-study on identical lines.

CEDANT ARMA TOGÆ!

[The Berlin Correspondent of the *Express* mentions a Ministerial decree which "states that soldiers who hesitate to kill or wound offending civilians are unworthy to wear their uniforms, and render themselves liable to imprisonment. . . . Though the issue of this decree indicates no new departure, it is intended to emphasise the fundamental idea in German militarism that military men are a class of society far superior to civilians." The following lines are respectfully placed in the lips of the German Minister of War.]

PRIDE of the Fatherland! Superb police,
Whose business is to keep in constant fettle,
Be it not said the rust of armed peace
Has paralysed your military mettle;
Prove that a courage equal to the best
Still agitates the Teuton's mailed chest.

You cannot always wallow in a sea
Of Gallic gore, or bulge with heathen booty;
The Watch upon the Rhine or else the Spree
Entails a homely round of bloodless duty;
But, while the counter-jumper walks the streets,
Scope should be surely found for martial feats.

There is a vicious habit, so we hear,
Which Army men are very rightly shocked at,
Of showing disregard for warlike gear—
The Captain's corset and the General's cocked-hat;
Men do not drop their dazzled eyes and faint
Before the warrior in his awful paint.

Yet, as the Brahman has his holy cow,
Or the primeval Hottentot his totem,
Two things there are to which we Germans bow
(Almost too widely known for me to quote 'em),
Two Faiths, our final stay in stress and storm—
The KAISER and the KAISER'S uniform.

And shall a man of mere commercial breed,
Lacking the elements of true gentility,
Pass in his homespun cloth or Harris tweed
Unchallenged 'twixt the wind and your nobility?
Not while you wear a sabre at your side
With which to perforate his paltry hide!

Should such an one (to take a common case),
Emboldened by excessive bouts of Munich
In some beer-garden which you deign to grace,
Brush disrespectfully against your tunic,
Or soil your Blüchers with civilian mud—
Out with your instant blade and have his blood!

Unter den Linden, when the sun is low,
And, in a leisure hour exempt from drilling,
With rigid gait and clanking spurs you go,
A dream of godlike beauty, simply killing,
If any knave dispute the path you tread,
Your falchion should at once remove his head.

Noblesse, of course, oblige. You mustn't trail
Your sabre-tache for vulgar churls to step on,
But seize occasion and you cannot fail
To find the man you want to flesh your weapon;
Should he (unarmed, for choice) provoke the strife,
Why, then your course is clear; you take his life!

Let not a low civilian wipe the eye
Of but "a single Pomeranian Grenadier";
Rather let Art, with Laws and Learning, die—
Pursuits to which the meaner types of men adhere;
I'd sooner even dislocate our Trade
Than let the Army's honour be mislaid.

That honour it is yours to guard unstained,
Burnished as though by frequent use of emery,
Keeping our glorious record well maintained,
Just as our mighty Lord of blessed memory,
The ne'er-to-be-forgotten WILLIAM ONE,
Would, were he living, like to see it done. O. S.

REED'S ENTIRE.

THIS show, at Messrs. BROWN AND PHILLIPS' Leicester Galleries, must not be missed by anyone who loves genuine, good-natured, genial caricature. No cruelty in the mixture. Even if you happen to be one of the caricatured, say Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Lord ROSEBERY, or Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, you couldn't be angry; you'd be bound to laugh and exclaim "how absurd!" Among the many comic presentments of "JOE," who may be looked upon as the universal provider of matter for political caricaturists, there is one here that at first sight might be a quizzical portrait of GEORGE GROSSMITH giving one of his humorous sketches, vocal and instrumental. No. 30, "*The Jackdaw of Louth*," Mr. TIM HEALY, M.P., is perfect as a specimen of Mr. REED's black and white art. Another, "selected" as specially good and wonderfully delicate in tone, is No. 36, "*The Tariff Spider at work in his Web*." Very far removed from caricature, but on the contrary a delightful portrait, is that of His Majesty King EDWARD THE SEVENTH, as we all love to see him, in excellent health and spirits, "starting the Marionettes," that is, opening Parliament and setting the figures a-moving. This No., 63, is a very remarkable and effective piece of work. 85—"when found make a note of"—"*Rosebery Bunsby*." "Whereby, why not? If so, what odds? Can any man say otherwise? No. Awast then! The bearings of this observation lays in the application on it. Awast then, keep a bright look-out for'ard, and good luck to you!"

The best of the "Unrecorded History Series" is, to our thinking, No. 110, suggested by "HOLBEIN's attempt to swim the Channel." Mr. REED might give us a recently discovered Assyrian tablet showing the most ancient Parliamentary proceedings of the Hittites (in Opposition) and the Sittites (the Government). But where there are so many excellent things every purchaser may feel assured that he individually has got the pick of the basket. A great number we see are already marked "Sold," and many intending buyers, arriving too late, will be in the position of those pictures (and be hanged to them!) when they only meet with the polite custodian's explanation, "All gone, Sir." No matter, there's more where those came from, let us hope, for many years to come.

There's many a true jest spoken in earnest.

WE are indebted to the *Indian Planters' Gazette* for calling public attention to the following passage from the *Advocate of India*, in which a comparison is drawn between German and English methods of commercial training:—

"The budding principal is drafted into an office through Oxford, where he has distinguished himself in the dead languages and won his spurs and his stiff knee in the eight who contest the annual football match at Lord's, or his blazer and straw hat in the fifteen who pulled off the cricket match between Mortlake and Putney."

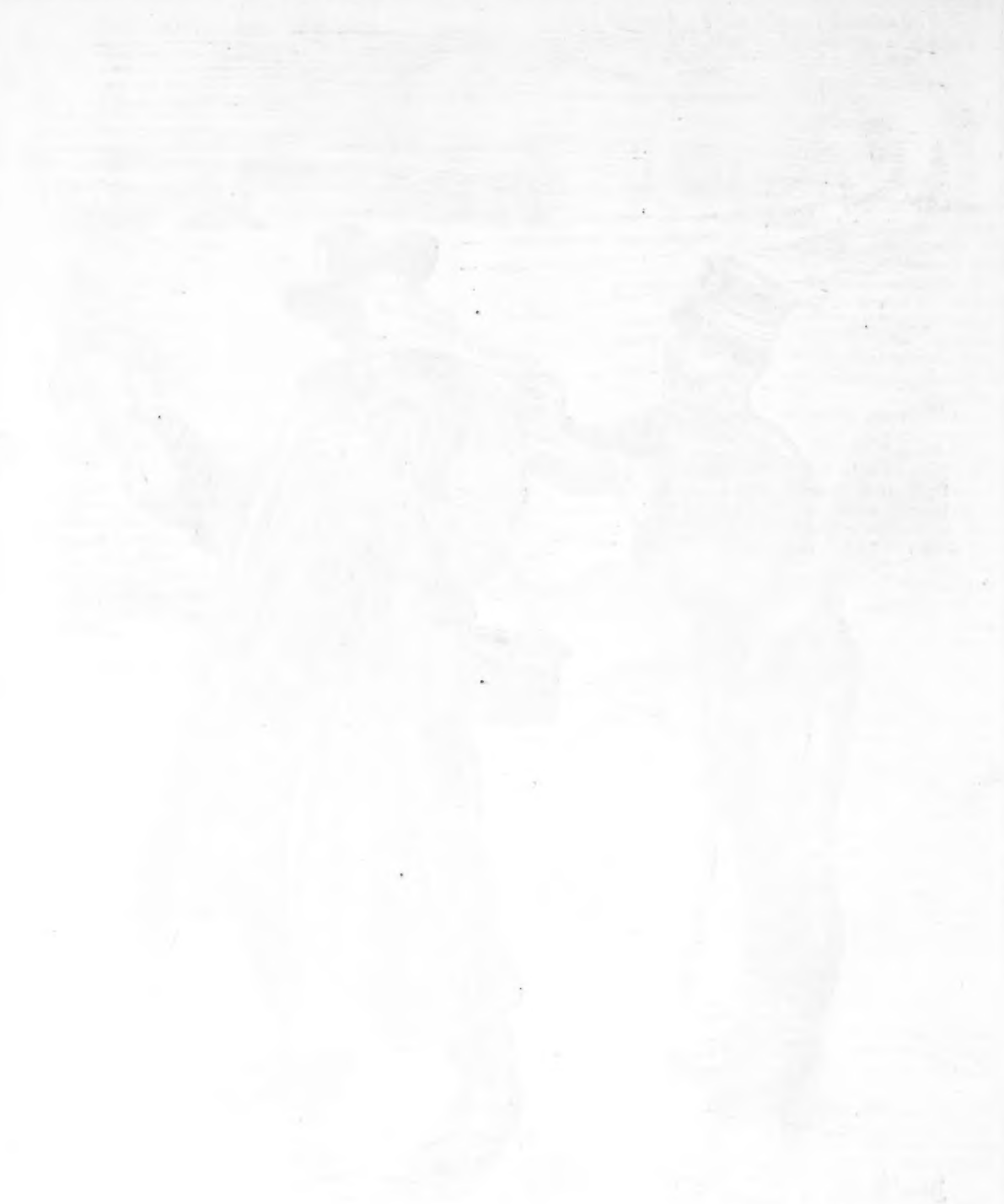
"OUIDA" must look to her laurels.

FRENCH ADAPTATION.—HONOUR to Mr. BARRIE. The authorities of the *Français* have under serious consideration an adaptation of Mr. BARRIE's now celebrated play. The scene is on board a Channel steamer. *Le Mal de Mer y est* has been suggested for the title.



THE WISDOM OF THE EAST.

JAPANESE OFFICER (to Press Correspondent). "ABJECTLY WE DESIRE TO DISTINGUISH HONOURABLE NEWSPAPER MAN BY HONOURABLE BADGE."





A LITTLE SURPRISE.

John (finishing the evening paper and wanting to commence the annual discussion). "WELL, DEAR, IS IT TO BE LIGHT BLUE OR DARK BLUE THIS YEAR?"

Edith. "HOW CLEVER YOU ARE, JOHN, TO KNOW WHAT I WAS THINKING ABOUT! I DIDN'T CARE TO MENTION IT. IT IS GOOD OF YOU TO SUGGEST MY GETTING A NEW ONE! I SHOULD SO LIKE A DARK BLUE COSTUME! LIGHT BLUE IS VERY NICE, AND SUITS ME TOO, BUT DARK BLUE IS BYE NO MUCH MORE SERVICEABLE, AND WE OUGHT TO THINK OF THAT." [And John hadn't the heart to explain that he only referred to the Boat-race.

LIFE'S LITTLE EMBARRAS-
MENTS.

(By the Expert Wrinkler.)

THE true test of greatness, as I have always held, is a man's ability to rise to the occasion, be it great or small. Your true man of the world will never be floored by an emergency, though, as I have often found myself, it may put him to serious inconvenience. For example, the first time I went to pay a visit to a ducal mansion, I found, on going up to dress for dinner, that my man had omitted to put up an evening waistcoat. I confess that I had what our festive friends across the Channel call "a bad quarter of an hour" before I saw my way out of the difficulty. Ringing the bell I took the footman into my confidence, and in ten minutes he had procured for me a cast-off waistcoat of the Duke's, which I bought off him—the footman, not the Duke—for a sovereign, and still keep amongst the most valued treasures of my wardrobe.

I need hardly say that on my return I gave my man such a talking to as he did not forget for years. An oversight of this sort is a regular crime, and it is folly to overlook it. My friend, Lord EUGENE SANDOWN, who was a very powerful man with a violent temper, whenever his man forgot anything in this way, used to throw it at him as a reminder. The man stood it for a while, but gave warning after being hit on the nose by a boot-tree. I am afraid, from what I hear on every side, that the loyalty of domestic servants is not a patch on what it used to be.

TABLE EMBARRASMENTS.

One of the most fertile sources of embarrassment is to be offered a dish with the composition of which you are not familiar, or which you don't know exactly how to manipulate. I shall never forget the awful experience I went through years ago at a very stylish dinner, when I tried to eat the sort of paper box in which portions of salmon

were served. On another occasion, in a fit of absent-mindedness, I put a large spoonful of ice pudding into my mouth, thinking it was hot. Over the sequel I draw a veil. We all of us have done foolish things in the past, and I only allude to the episode in order that it may serve as a danger signal to my readers. It is consoling, however, to know that persons of high rank and noble birth do not escape these unpleasantnesses. For instance, there was a foreign Count, I think he came from Circassia or some such place, who was invited to stay at Lord HIGHCLERE's, and when they brought him hot water in the morning, not knowing what to do with it, he drank it! Shrimps, again, are a severe trial to men of refined natures. And many men are often seriously embarrassed by being given tea or coffee too hot to be swallowed with impunity. In such a case at all hazards resist the temptation to blow on the boiling beverage or empty it into your saucer. Some men in these circumstances

extricate themselves by indulging in facetiousness, e.g., saying to their hostess, "I'm afraid I'll have to trouble you for some more cow-juice," or, "Look here, you seem to think that I'm like Lord TEIGNMOUTH, who can swallow anything." On the whole I think it is better form to wait until the fluid has cooled of itself. Some people, however, carry about with them little refrigerating tabloids, which will reduce the hottest tea to an endurable temperature. In this connection let me give my readers a piece of advice. If by any ill chance you should drop an oyster or a poached egg on the cloth or the floor, do not attempt to pick it up yourself, but allow the hunt to be conducted by one of the domestics. One generally makes bad worse in the attempt, besides calling attention to one's misfortune.

MISCELLANEOUS AGONIES.

There is perhaps nothing so painful for a smart man as to find himself unsuitably clad. I shall never forget once seeing at the Oxford and Cambridge match a tall man with a pointed beard, wearing a low evening waistcoat and a black-bow tie. He did not seem in the least conscious of his position, and I found out afterwards that he was a Russian Grand Duke. That no doubt enabled him to carry it off. For myself, one of the few experiences in my career that I should like to obliterate was that of finding myself in Piccadilly wearing a frock-coat and a straw hat. It was a warm morning in May, and without thinking what I was doing I put on a straw hat and walked out from my chambers in the Albany in the direction of the Park. Most providentially I had not got as far as Devonshire House when my old friend the Hon. PERCY MARTINGALE met me, and, leading me up Berkeley Street, explained what had happened. I concealed myself in the passage leading to Curzon Street until he called a fourwheeler, and went home with the blinds down. My only excuse was that I had had a sharp attack of the "flu," which occasionally affects the memory. Fortunately I was able not very long afterwards to repay the Hon. PERCY MARTINGALE for his kind service in a somewhat similar way. Meeting him in the Park, I noticed that he had omitted to remove the label from his new Chesterfield, which bore the inscription, "Sale Price, £2 12s. 6d." I feel pretty sure that if his father, Lord PUNCHSTOWN, had seen it, he would have cut him off with a shilling.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

YELLOW PERIL, SHOEBURNESS.—(1) I am afraid I cannot tell you why boot trees are so called. Perhaps they could enlighten you at Kew Gardens. (2) No. WELLINGTON invented his boot before

the Battle of Waterloo. (3) Gladstone bags were, I believe, so called owing to the Liberal leader's historic reference to "bag and baggage."

CYRANO DE BERGERAC, BRONDESBURY.—It is not usual to have a frock-coat made of Harris tweed; in fact, owing to the facial defect from which you suffer, I should say it would not suit you.

CASABIANCA, BURNISLAND.—(1) If your expression is melancholy, an excellent corrective is to turn up the ends of your moustache. (2) Yes. A trouser-press

APOLOGY.

DEAR CHAP.—Beg pardon. I thought this letter, which I return, was addressed to me, and so—like the unexpectedly bad egg—it was



"OPENED BY MISTAKE!"

would be an excellent wedding present; but be sure you address it to the bridegroom.

Rare Combination!

A PIANOFORTE recital (announced for the 15th) by Miss LLOYD at Bechstein Hall under "the management of G. SHARPE." Not likely therefore to be a flat affair. Further good news: Miss LLOYD is to be "assisted by Mr. MARIS HALE (Bass) and accompanist Mr. HAMILTON HARTY." There's a combination! Two performers, "HALE and HARTY." And the HALE is Bass!! Pity it isn't for next Tuesday, but 'twas for yesterday. No matter; for such a trio there must be an encore.

THE MUSE OF HISTORY.—II.

TEST MATCHES.

THERE once was a skipper named PLUM, Whose team made the prophets all glum; "It's bad through and through." They declared: "it won't do." But to-day all those prophets are dumb.

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

A SOLON + SHAKESPEARE named SHAW Wished to fashion St. Pancras's law. He'd a Moderate mind, And to Progress inclined; But St. Pancras resented his jaw.

TOKIO.

There were once Correspondents galore Bottled up in a town by the shore. They could float its pagodas In whisky-and-sodas,— But where is their news of the War?

LORD HUGH CECIL.

There was a lean lordling named HUGH, Who looked like a pious Hindoo: But beneath that disguise We could all recognise The chief of a cannibal crew.

LORD ESHER.

"The Critic I'll never forget For the way he designed to upset My pet Army corps And the Office of War, Is—REGINALD BALLOL BRETT."

MR. BRODRICK.

There is an ex-warhorse named Brodger, A most conscientious old plodder, He sees in Ah Sin TOMMY ATKINS's kin, And daily grows odder and odder.

LORD ROSEBERRY.

A Primrose, of character canny, Who modestly bloomed in a cranny, Though bland and urbane, Once was heard to complain He'd be blanked if he stood Pretty FANNY.

THE GOVERNMENT.

There once was one pamphlet (not two), And oh, what a hullabaloo! Suppose there'd been three . . . But, how glad we should be There was only one pamphlet (not two).

No sutor ultra crepidam.

In the fine art of parody KIPLING progresses fast, While in each new endeavour he Still goes beyond his last.

MOTTO FOR JAPAN (from popular old Sporting Song).—The Boy in Yellow wins the day!

CHARIVARIA.

THE War between Russia and Japan is taking place under the most distinguished patronage. We learn from the newspapers that our own little Princes, and the CZAR, have purchased maps, and pins with flags, and are following the course of events with the greatest interest.

It was reported one day last week that the Koreans, "as the result of a collision" at Kangsye, had driven the Russians back beyond the Yalu. Those who know the Koreans will agree that it could only have been the result of an accident.

Last week's *Dispatch* contained "A Baronet's Jokes." We are pleased to find Baronets making jokes. It raises our profession.

Some surprise was expressed at the arrival of some warm sunny days last week, but surely one would expect a Leap Year to have a certain amount of Spring in it.

Last week it was stated that the signal-book of H.M.S. *Prince George* had been thrown overboard by some evil-disposed person, but public anxiety was somewhat relieved by the announcement that, like all signal-books, it was so weighted that it would sink, and still further relieved by the news that it had been found floating in the Tagus.

It is so difficult nowadays to be a gentleman that one feels really grateful to the *Daily Mirror* for publishing a *communiqué* on the subject of handkerchiefs. A representative of that organ was fortunate enough to get a glimpse of the KING's Royal Handkerchief at the Shire Horse Show, and in future all but rank outsiders will use a small cambric handkerchief with a deep red border in the morning, and a plain white one in the afternoon and evening. *This applies both to country and town.*

Meanwhile, among the lower orders the colour most affected would still appear to be dark white.

The War is already developing a "light side." The "Jolly Japs" have had a good joke at Port Arthur by causing the Russians to waste ammunition on dummy boats, and it is now reported that General KUROPATKIN has bought three magnificent chestnuts.

The *Westminster Gazette* publishes a column entitled "Men, Women, and Things," and the ladies and gentlemen



THE ENTHUSIAST.

Jones (whose breakfast has been waiting for the last half-hour). "Now, IF ONLY THEY CAN GET FROM CHERMULPO TO WI-JU," ETC., ETC.

whose names figure therein hope they come in one of the first two categories.

We are reminded of a certain provincial paper which, in describing a social function, stated, "*Inter alia* we noticed his Worship the Mayor."

Messrs. ANTHONY TREHERNE & Co. have produced "the smallest *Shakespeare* in the world." SHAKESPEARE himself was once this.

The article in the current number of the *Strand Magazine* entitled "Battles with Berge" is not an advertisement for Insect Powder.

Mr. HAVELOCK ELLIS has written a book in which he attempts to ascertain what goes to make British Genius. Mr. ELLIS

announces that he is still pursuing his investigations, and it is rumoured that several of our most prominent authors and authoresses have offered themselves for examination.

Resolutions of sympathy with passive resisters were passed last week at the Free Church Council. We are inclined to think that the Free Church Council is right, and that the poor creatures are objects for our sympathy rather than our anger.

Two Dickies in the Field.

The *Yorkshire Post*, describing the interest created in the House by the debate of the 9th inst., speaks of "a hundred men who had been dining and presented expanses of shirt front on both sides."

INSULAR PROTECTION.

[In an article in the *Fortnightly Review*, Mrs. JOMY LAW, from the point of view of the American hostess, wonders if it is shyness that makes the Englishman so hard to entertain.]

Chorus of American Girls.

O sons of Britannia, the thought of you lured us
To cross in Cunarders the perilous sea;
We braved the wild billows, for rumour assured us
That nowhere were men so delightful as ye.
But when we look kind you are solemn and frigid,
You blush at the glint of a maidenly eye,
And the more we unbend, you become the more rigid—
O sons of Britannia, why are you so shy?

Chorus of English Men.

Columbia's daughters, we're filled with emotion
At thought of the favours you heap upon us,
For—distance no object—you traversed the ocean
To spoil us with kindness and flattering fuss.
But we're so accustomed to manners which freeze us,
To tongues which are dumb, that we're tempted to fly
When we meet with a countenance anxious to ease us,
And that is perhaps why you find us so shy.

Chorus of American Girls.

O sons of Britannia, in vain will you harden
Your adamant hides to the snares of the foe;
We still will pursue you in ball-room and garden,
On river and race-course—wherever you go.
You've old country seats and delectable titles;
All arts known to woman we're going to ply;
We'll borrow love's arrows and aim at your vitals,
And teach you to be just a little less shy.

Chorus of English Men.

Columbia's daughters, we've British-made beauty;
Whatever the charms of American fairs,
Still England expects us to stick to our duty
And preference give to our own native wares.
In vain have you boarded the heaving Cunarder,
In vain for our castles and scutcheons you sigh;
Our country is calling; the patriot's ardour
That burns in the Briton still bids us be shy.

THE COMING OPERA SEASON.

This year two Arts join hands and dance through the London Season together up to a certain point, when Painting outstays Music; for the Academy and the Opera are announced to commence together on Monday, May 2, and while the Opera comes to an end on July 25 the Academy continues with us for some days longer.

As to the Opera, Mr. *Punch* is able to announce that Dr. RICHTER is to be entrusted with the interests of Wagnerian productions, and will direct special performances of *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan* and *Die Meistersinger* without any cutting remarks. This is kind: so we shall hear these works in their entirety. Perhaps the Doctor's prescription will be a trifle too strong even for some Wagnerians.

Ballo en Maschera is to be revived, and this will interest not a few ancient *habitues* who, clearly remembering MARIO in the chief rôle, can only look upon his successors as, by comparison, mere Mario-nettes.

Dr. RICHTER, Signor MANCINELLI the Merry, and Herr LÖHSE, will be the conductors to ward off the stroke of the critics' lightning. The strings in the orchestra are to be strengthened with chords, and it is hoped that the *grande caisse* in front of the house will be considerably benefited by all the new arrangements. On the opening night it is expected that the

best known *habitues* and strenuous supporters of the Opera will bow from their stalls and private boxes. The National Anthem, arranged as a trio (with chorus), will be sung by Lord DE GREY, Mr. HIGGINS, and Lord ESHER. The forces will be under the supervision of General Manager MESSENGER; while Mr. NEIL FORSYTH will be again at the post whereon he will be perched throughout the season to which Mr. *Punch* heartily wishes the greatest success.

THE BUMBLE-BEE-BOY.

THIS is a tale that was told to me
Of a boy who was born a Bumble-Bee.
He never required to wet his throttle
With a drink of milk from a feeding-bottle;
They never brought him pap in a ladle;
He never was rocked in a ribboned cradle;
Nobody saw him gasp or struggle,
Or box with his fists or crow or guggle;
And none of his mother's friends said "There!
Did you ever? I never. I do declare
You needn't be born with a taste for photos
To see that the child, from his tootsie-totos
To his sweet little damp little tips of coral,
Is—look at the pet—his Ma's own moral.
But his nose, when it's formed, I think will rather
Remind us all of his blessed father;
While, as for his eyes which are blue as blue,
They're the child's own eyes and his ears are, too."
And never a nurse, as far as I know,
Said, "Bless him, he isn't one to pine, no,
Not he; it's a week since I weighed him last,
But he's done so well, and he's growed so fast,
That, law, you might a'most call him bloated,
And next week, sure, he must be short-coated."
He never sat in his chair and bubbled,
And his dear little temper was never troubled
With dust in his eyes or a safety pin
Stuck by mistake in his tender skin;
And as to his teeth—you know that pest
Which robs us of all our lawful rest—
I'm game to wager a brand-new penny
That he didn't fret, for he hadn't any.

They never took him and washed his head
Or his body and legs with soap or borax;
A window-pane was his simple bed,
And he hadn't a neck, but he had a thorax.
And, oh, he was jolly and fat and round—
You never saw such a fat round fellow—
With wings that buzzed with a booming sound,
And a body of black with a dash of yellow.
Whenever he wished to, out he flew
As fast as a car with a X horse-power,
And skimmed the bushes and drank the dew,
As he flitted and perched from flower to flower.
And when he was tired he flew again
Back to his bed on the window-pane.

He was never worried with A.B.C.,
He was never troubled with one two three,
But he did what he jolly well liked, as free
As a Bumble-Bee-Boy is bound to be.

THE Bar Point-to-Point Steeplechase is fixed for April 12. Several difficult Legal Points are now being raised. To certain propositions, that have been made to the Committee, the riders strongly object.



THE TERTIUM QUID.

"DO YOU KNOW, MABEL, I BELIEVE IF I WEREN'T HERE, CAPTAIN SPOONER WOULD KISS YOU."
 "LEAVE THE ROOM THIS INSTANT, YOU IMPERTINENT LITTLE BOY!"

THE LAST GASP.

[A medical man, writing in one of the papers on the bad ventilation of the House of Commons, asks, "May not such a somnolent and unhealthy atmosphere account for many a bad argument, feeble speech, and faulty Act of Parliament?" and suggests that the air of the House is conducive to "cerebral anæmia, inertia, and possible sudden death."]

WE M.P.s, we are blessed with a lot
 That is dismal and sad and dejected;
 We embark on a life
 Of tempestuous strife
 As soon as we're duly elected.
 Could the public but view on the spot
 The conditions we're labouring under,
 They would pity, not blame,
 If our speeches sound tame,
 Or the Acts that we pass seem to blunder.

From the seats where Hibernians lurk
 To the place of the ladies and strangers,
 We're compassed about
 With a hideous rout
 Of countless invisible dangers.
 Quite apart from the strain of our work,

Which, as everyone knows, is enormous,
 Each mouthful of breath
 Is a possible death—
 At least so the papers inform us.
 In the face of these facts can you blame
 If we scarcely attain your ideal?
 (Not one of us knew
 They existed, it's true,
 But the menace was none the less real.)
 Spite of all, have we lowered our aim?
 If we've failed, has a man of us
 Faltered?
 But we'd legislate soon
 To a different tune,
 If only the air could be altered.

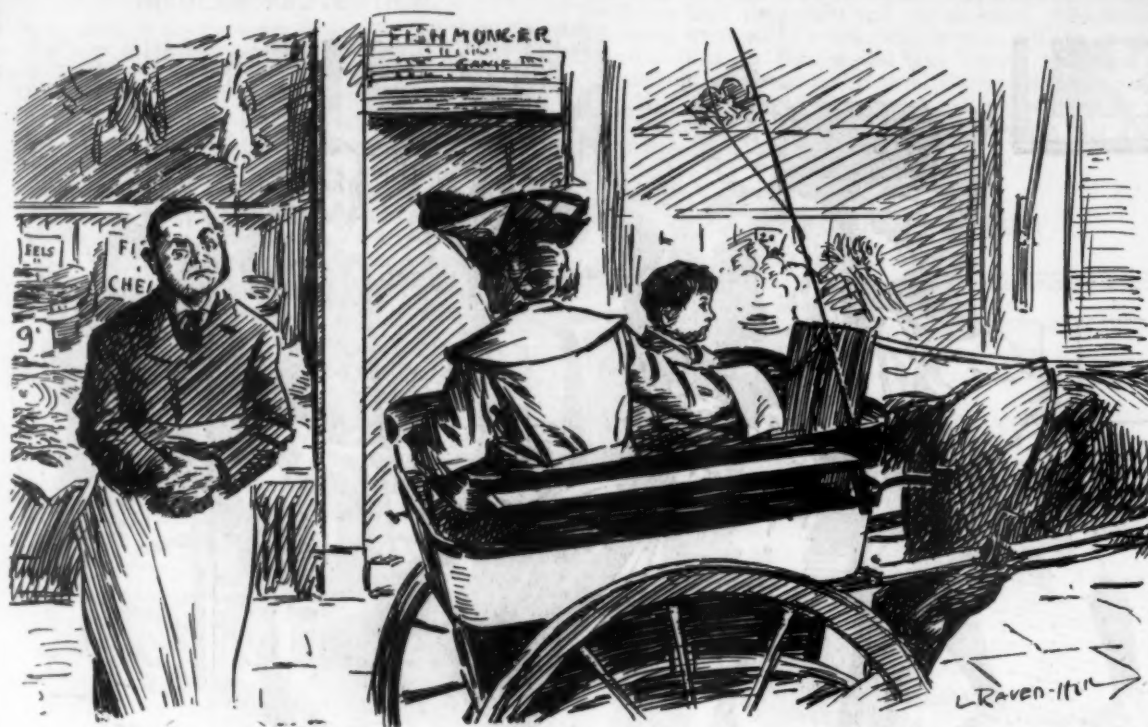
HOME CURED.

UNDER the heading "Spring Weariness," the *Daily Mail* describes the utter languor and prostration that assails the run-down woman at this season of the year, and informs those who cannot afford a trip to the Riviera like their richer sisters, but from force of circumstances must remain in town,

that they will find themselves materially strengthened and restored by washing the face and hands. We should like to add for the further benefit of such sufferers that we have found the occasional brushing of the hair, and even the cutting of the finger nails from time to time, a wonderful remedy for disorders of this description.

As an extreme resort in cases of utter prostration the removal of the foot-gear before retiring to bed will be found both efficacious and inexpensive. Where acute depression and ennui supervene, a noticeable alteration in the style of coiffure will stimulate the spirits and add interest to the life of the most dejected, the constitution often gaining in tone and the nerves becoming revitalised by a complete change of hair.

"THE Polish contingent in the Russian army," says a correspondent of the *Times*, "is limited to 15 per cent. of the whole." It is considered wise to distribute them among various Regiments, the *mot d'ordre* being "Poles asunder."



FISHY!

Lady. "REALLY, MR. GUDGON, YOUR FISH SEEMS TO GET DEARER EVERY WEEK!"

Fishmonger. "WELL, MUM, WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT WITH ALL THE RAIN WE'VE HAD?"

HINTS FOR THE VERY YOUNG.

In sudden cases of shock, such as being confronted, without further warning than the discomfort of a clean robe, with paternal great-aunt or maternal bachelor friend, it has been found efficacious to contract the arms and legs, stiffen the spine, contort the features, open the mouth and hold the breath till blueness of face supervenes. The immediate and occasionally violent removal of the apparition is ensured by these simple tactics, and rapid return to the nursery guaranteed.

The habit of screaming at a hovering teaspoonful of dill-water cannot be too strongly deprecated. The open throat plays into the unscrupulous hands of the operator and defeats its own ends. The mouth may be left open after the last protest, but the throat should be closed, in order to allow the noxious fluid, augmented with tears and dribbling, to run out of the corners of the lips and escape down the neck unperceived. In the case of the nose being held, the only remedy is to choke to suffocation, thereby preventing any repetition of this unsportsmanlike practice.

Regarding night-work it is always advisable to retain the services of both

parents, paternal joggling forming a pleasant variety to maternal swaying. If eventually returned by heartless paternal parent to cradle to scream at will, the matter becomes one of endurance merely, in which the Very Young invariably scores. When left to a nurse a quiet and peaceful night may be indulged in, training being wasted on such a changeable commodity as nurses. The early education of parents, however, is emphatically recommended.

In the matter of bathing, when conducted by a young mother, it is as well to create a precedent while the experience is fresh to both. It will be found a helpful practice—apart from screaming without pause and appearing to get the eyes full of soap—to slip through the uncertain hands into the deep water of the basin. This manoeuvre, in spite of personal inconvenience, not to say risk from drowning, causes so much alarm and agitation that there is always a hopeful possibility of the bath being discontinued for the future.

The Cherub in the House.

WANTED, Nurse, after Easter, one child, year old, willing to help in the house.
Yorkshire Post.

Protracted Addresses.

HOTEL proprietors are hereby warned against printing too much information on their note-paper. Faithfully reproduced by the innocent foreigner it has been known to yield the following result, as reported by a correspondent:—

Esq.

Calorifères dans toutes
Les Chambres.

Lawn Tennis.

Hôtel Verdi,

Rapallo,

Italy.

Mr. Punch's modesty would be offended, if he were addressed, on tour, as,
Mons. Punch,

Central Heating.

Patronised by the Best
American Families.

Vue Magnifique

Sur le lac,

Roosevelt Hotel,
Geneva.

Sporting Youth (reading cricket news at breakfast). I see **TRUMBLE** broke a foot and was unplayable.

Nervous Mother. I do wish, Bertie, you wouldn't read such distressing things aloud at meals.



CRUSHED AGAIN.

RIGHT HON. ST. J-HN BR-DR-OK (*Author and Military Impersonator*). "IT'S ONE THING TURNING ME OUT OF THE LEADING PART IN MY OWN PLAY, BUT WHEN IT COMES TO HAVING IT COMPLETELY RE-WITTEN— I'VE A JOLLY GOOD MIND TO GO IN FRONT AND BOO."



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, March 7.

—THE MEMBER FOR SARK has vivid recollection, dating back to early manhood, of sitting enthralled through a play called *A Scrap of Paper*. As far as he remembers there was a sort of family cabinet council. Someone wrote a dubious document round whose suspected existence mystery brooded. At last Mr. KENDAL found it rolled up as a spill in an ornament on the chimney-piece, and there was the doose to pay.

As *Jaques* (not the Emperor of the SAHARA) once said, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." To-night, by special desire, *A Scrap of Paper* was staged at the T.R., Westminster. Boxes full; pit crowded; galleries thronged; standing room only. Enter JOHN ELLIS; wants to know all about the *Scrap of Paper*.

Story of play runs something like this: At Cabinet Council held in August the PREMIER, alleged villain of the piece, went down to Downing Street with two documents in his possession, one reposing in left coat-tail pocket, the other disposed of in the right. One, the bulkier, declaring against Protection to the length advocated by the Second Villain (DON JOSÉ), was, as in the course of the play the First Villain airily remarks, "published at a price that brought it



THE WESTMINSTER LOUNGE AND THE WHITECHAPEL LOAF.

(The Burdett-Coutts walk and its undoubted origin.)

Coster. "Lor' lumme! Ain't 'e got the walk an' all!? Fancy them toffs s-himitating hus! Wot wiv the tilt of the 'at and the trousers cut a bit saucy, blow'd if yer wouldn't 'ardly kneow us apart!"

within reach of Liberal millionaires." The other, the *Scrap of Paper* that gives the play its name, flatly contradicted the pamphlet MS., and declared in favour of Preferential Tariffs.

JOHN ELLIS, sombre-visaged, hard-voiced, implacable, wants to know where is that *Scrap of Paper*? By the great Heavens above, by Styx rolling gloomily through pathless wastes below, he demands its production.

"JOHN ELLIS," said PRINCE ARTHUR *sotto voce*, leaning his elbow on the Treasury Bench as with head on one side he curiously watched the Member for Nottinghamshire, "was born out of due season. He is some centuries too young. He ought to have lived in days when the Inquisition, to a certain extent, filled the place of the London County Council. Or better still, he ought to have been the executioner. Yes, now I come to think of it, one watching JOHN (on occasions like this subtly feels the unaccountable, and, if I may say so, the unbecoming, absence of the mask and the axe."

PRINCE ARTHUR'S reverie interrupted

by call-boy. Promptly responding had enthusiastic reception. Theatre audience, especially the gallery portion, always have sneaking affection for the villain of the piece. Rarely on the stage is seen one so *débonnaire*, so guileless as PRINCE ARTHUR, standing to-night at the Table whilst crowded Opposition Bench eagerly eyed him, and on back bench sat JOHN ELLIS sharpening an invisible axe on an imperceptible grindstone.

Nothing apologetic in bearing of the accused. A casual observer not having caught thread of the story might well suppose that if anything had gone wrong about a *Scrap of Paper* the peccant person was seated on benches opposite. The trend of PRINCE ARTHUR'S glance, its severity when it fell upon serene countenance of C.-B., suggested that *there* sat the real villain of the piece.

As usual on these occasions PRINCE ARTHUR'S manner was founded upon that of the *Walrus*—not the companion of *Alice* in *Wonderland*, but the one whose habits were studied by the French poet

Cet animal est très-méchant;
Quand on l'attaque il se défend.



"Sombre-visaged, hard-voiced, implacable."
(Mr. John Ellis wants "a stream" of Ministers.)

He hit out all round, not forgetting late colleagues below the gangway. But ever he came back to the blameless C-B. Talking about speculations current at period when the Scrap of Paper first fluttered in Downing Street, speculations culminating in assurance of break-up of the Ministry, he observed, "Every kind of suggested combination reached my ears. Though by the way I do not remember that the name of the right hon. gentleman opposite came into any one of them."

A hit, a palpable hit. House roared in delighted mirth. JOHN ELLIS moved uneasily at his grindstone. This most irregular. PRINCE ARTHUR was, so to speak, in the dock. Technically he was there; but instead of whimpering for mercy, promising repentance, or even endeavouring to explain away compromising matters, here he was banging the jury on the head, butting the judge in the stomach, utterly ignoring the authority, and even the presence of the tipstaff, selecting the most blameless, supremely respectable looking gentleman among the audience, and fixing upon him whatever guilt might attach to the Scrap of Paper, whatever obloquy resulted from its manipulation.



REMARKABLE COIFFURE IN THE PEERS' GALLERY.
(Lord Sp-nor's novel head-dress, or the strange effect of winter gloves.)

Very little to do with the indictment. But it is high comedy. Final touch given by circumstance that whilst public business is set aside, House seething with excitement over personal incident, Don José, who created the situation, is quietly enjoying himself under summer skies, "leaving the anguish to us."

Business done.—Adjournment moved by way of indicting PREMIER for conduct in connection with throwing overboard from Cabinet JONAH RITCHIE and JOHANNA HAMILTON. Ministerial majority still nominally over a hundred. Mustered only sixty-five in defence of PREMIER under charge he himself described as that of "jockeying his colleagues."

Wednesday night.—Mr. WHARTON, P.C., Director of North Eastern Railway, Knight of Grace and of St. John of Jerusalem, is thinking of retiring from the business of statesmanship. To-day perceived great opportunity; seized it by the hair, as they say at Boulogne.

Opposition, eager to make most of Ministerial difficulties, had put up PIRIE with motion deprecating language used by certain of His Majesty's Ministers advocating Preferential and Protective Tariffs. This designed less with view of declaring vote on Opposition benches than with hope of catching Free Fooders in Ministerial camp. At best they could not vote against the motion, and Ministers would have another bad majority.

Then WHARTON rose to full height, which exceeds six feet. Determined to save the Government. Characteristic of a statesman who combines railway directorship with Knighthood of Grace, WHARTON bent upon compromise. If he could frame amendment to PIRIE's motion so drafted as to provide a golden bridge over which Unionist Free Fooders might march into Lobby with their leaders, surely they would gratefully accept it.

Took off his coat; sat down; bound his knightly head in spotless linen cooled in New River water; seized a Knight of Jerusalem's quill pen; in half an hour produced his masterpiece. Amendment declared approval of "the explicit declaration of His Majesty's Ministers that their policy of fiscal reform includes neither a general system of Protection nor of Preference based on the taxation of food."

"That'll fetch 'em," said the Knight of Grace, wiping his Jerusalem pen on the lining of his West-end frock coat. Showed it to AGLAND-HOOD.

"Capital," said Ministerial Whip.

"The very thing," said PRINCE ARTHUR when it was submitted to him.

When amendment appeared on Paper painful discovery obtruded itself. As on historic occasion GRANDOLPH "forgot GOSCHEN," so now the Knight of Peace had forgotten the Chamberlainites within the Ministerial fold. These met, a hundred strong. Recognised in amendment distinct, deliberate, public, irrevocable chucking-over of Don José. Sent ultimatum to hapless PRINCE ARTHUR. If amendment persisted in they would vote with Opposition; whereupon it was the Government, not Don José, who would be chucked.

Nothing to be done but wipe out WHARTON and his amendment. To-night, when motion moved and seconded, opening made for amendment, Opposition jubilantly shouted "WHARTON! WHARTON!"

But WHARTON was not.

Business done.—On motion directed against fiscal reform in direction of

Protection, Government majority run down to 46.

Friday night.—DON CURRIE no longer with us in the Commons. But he is not forgotten. Memory lingers over the vision of the alert, keen-visaged septua-



Mr. Ch-pl-n shows signs of boredom when Free Trade doctrines are being uttered.

genarian flitting about the Lobby, always with an armful of documents to be considered, letters arrived by the latest post. Everyone sorry to hear that he is just now, contrary to lifelong habit, taking it lying down. SARK brings the latest news from the sick bed.

"Sir DONALD," so it runs, "is progressing favourably. He is able to sit up for a short time twice a day."

Something pathetic in that last sentence. Known DON CURRIE pretty intimately a score of years. Through that period have observed it was his custom to make other people "sit up," not merely twice a day, but all day, or as long as his transaction with them lasted. That only in the way of business, when Highland blood, ever keen at bartering, manifested itself. In the relations of private life there were revealed other aspects of the Highlander—as generosity, high courtesy, and a certain air of chivalry.

DON CURRIE the kind of shrewd business man, accustomed to handle large affairs, who largely helps to form backbone of Commons. He did not often speak. Such men don't. But his influence distinctly felt.

Business done.—Private Members'.

"THERE is an almost absolute absence of news from the East." This is now the accepted preface for the usual six or eight columns of "War-news" in our leading papers.



BREAKING THE NEWS.

Nearly Affected One. "MAY I BE YOUR NEW MAMMA, TOMMY?"
Tommy. "I SHOULD LIKE IT, BUT YOU MUST ASK PAPA."

CRICKET REFORM.

(With acknowledgments to Mr. Gilbert Jessop.)

Now that the Test Matches are over and attention can be paid to cricket at home, I should like to bring forward a few points which have been omitted from my contributions to the *Daily Mail*, but upon which I feel very deeply: they are all, I need hardly say, put forth in the interest of cricket as a noble spectacle.

SHOULD RAIN BE ALLOWED?

The recent Test Matches are in themselves sufficient proof of the mischief and havoc that can be wrought in the king of games by a steady down-pour. What the M.C.C. Committee ought to do before anything else, is to endeavour to come to some decision with regard to rain.

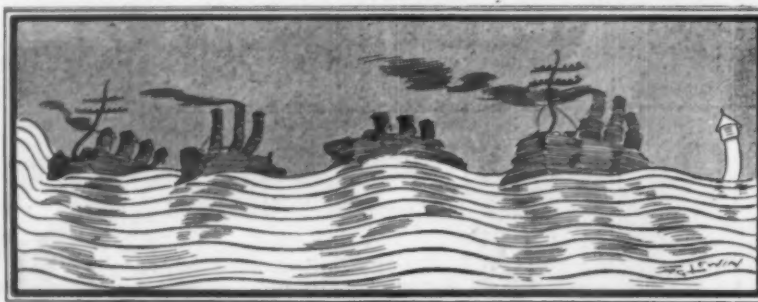
Tenders for rain-stopping should be invited from all the leading scientists, such as MAXIM, EDISON, MARCONI and H. G. WELLS. Unless something is done cricket might as well be discontinued. Over and over again the best batsmen are dismissed for a round 0 or a mere handful of runs, owing to the disastrous effect of rain on the pitch. All wickets should be plumb. In the event of the experiments of the scientists failing, every county ground should be supplied with an umbrella large enough to cover the whole pitch, without interfering with the view of either spectators or reporters. The umbrella's stick is the only difficulty; but I have no doubt that some device could be hit upon by which the canopy could be held up. It might be suspended from a captive balloon.

SHOULD POPULAR BATSMEN BE GIVEN OUT?

Here we touch upon delicate ground. But the fact remains that, under the prevailing conditions, Englishmen who have paid their money to see certain batsmen perform are too often compelled to leave the ground baffled of their desire. That so many worthy persons should be disappointed is surely a state of things not contemplated by the original compilers of the laws of the game. The circumstance that cricket exists to amuse spectators makes it of the highest importance that a favourite performer should have a full innings every time. To this end I propose to deliver a series of lectures to bowlers and fielders on the principles of altruism, showing them how the lowest, even a long-stop, may contribute his mite towards the prolongation of a batsman's life when the happiness of the greatest number demands it.

TUBES IMPERATIVE FOR BATSMEN WHO MAKE DUCKS.

Probably no sight is more cheerless to



THIS IS NEITHER THE RUSSIAN NOR THE JAPANESE FLEET DURING A STORM; IT IS MERELY A VIEW OF OUR NEIGHBOURS' ROOFS AND CHIMNEY STACKS THROUGH THE BAD PANE OF GLASS PUT IN OUR TOMMY'S BEDROOM WINDOW THE OTHER DAY.

the spectators of cricket, and certainly few experiences are more depressing to the batsman, than the return to the pavilion after failure to score.

In the foregoing paragraph I have given my reasons for holding that blobs or even short innings should be made impossible; but in default of that I am persuaded that in as far as possible mortification should be spared. To this end I wish to revive an old project of the present Colonial Secretary for an underground passage from the wicket to the dressing-rooms. To make this passage would be a very simple business. The entry would be gained by an ordinary man-hole just behind the stumps at the pavilion end, and it would need to be kept carefully closed until wanted, in case the wicket-keeper fell in at a critical moment.

The other end would be somewhere well within the pavilion walls, to obviate that most painful part of the whole *débâcle*, the ascent of the pavilion steps. The tube would be lighted by electricity, and there might perhaps be a writing recess in it, furnished with ink, pens and paper, in which the batsman could record for the morrow's paper his impressions of the fatal ball while they were still warm and vivid.

THE NEED OF GREATER FACILITIES FOR CRICKETING-WRITERS.

That very necessary person the cricketer-writer is confronted every day by new obstacles, which I feel it my duty to attempt to remove. For example, suppose that CHARLES FREY has undertaken to forward a column descriptive of his innings, ball by ball, to the *Daily Half-Volley*, and he is in for four hours. It stands to reason that if he does not begin his record until he is out he is in danger of losing sight of the character of some of the early balls: his perceptions will be blunted; he will forget whether he nicked this for three or cut that for two; and his readers—the great generous reading public for whom we

all toil—will be disappointed, if not positively defrauded. What I suggest therefore is that a five minutes' interval be taken every quarter of an hour during the day, in which all cricketers who have journalistic engagements may jot down their impressions. Few on the field would be idle. I would suggest that note books and telegraph forms be compulsorily carried by the umpires—several for every man, in case a literary impulse overtook him. Only in this way can cricket be properly written about; and without writing] the game falls to the ground.

THE CONTEMPLATIVE MAN'S EXPENSES.

["In the South it is no uncommon thing for a club of twenty-five men to pay £1250 yearly for the right of fishing in two or three miles of stream. Considerations of that kind stimulate the imagination . . ."—From "Trout Fishing," by W. Earl Hodgson (A. & C. Black).]

Mr. Punch's imagination, all afire with these golden "considerations," has been projected into the future, and rewarded with an impression of a few items in the advertisement columns of a sporting journal which will appear fifty years hence.

Salmon.—To be Let immediately. Splendid rock overlooking good spring salmon beat in the North. Three feet square, only twenty-five yards from water. Tenant may cast from rock (fly only) two days a week. £1000.

Trout Fishing.—Visitors to the Wild Ass Hotel, Poddleton, have the privilege of angling from the municipal bridge over the Slosh, both sides. Terms, £3 3s. a day, include fishing tickets.

Thames Fishing.—To Let, commodious Windsor chair in punt, commanding best gudgeon swim in the Thames, from June 16. Only £15 a week.

Irish Lakes.—First-rate trout fishing may be had in Loughs Bog and Slough

by staying at the Eriugobragh Hotel. Terms, with boat and boatman, a shilling a minute.

Angling.—Every man his own fishery owner! Why go to Thibet for your fishing when you can have it at home? Try our patent up-to-date trout lakes. Can be affixed to any back garden. All sizes, from 100/- upwards. Also artificial india-rubber trout (open and shut mouth, move fins and tail), equal to real five-pound fish as in millionaire's preserves. Every man his own millionaire. Order at once from Messrs. CHUCK AND CHANCIT, Fleet Street, E.C.

INTERCEPTED LETTERS.

MON CHER LÉOPOLD.—Pour le moment on me laisse tranquille. On nous dit des injures à tour de rôle. Maintenant c'est à vous. Sont-ils embêtants avec leurs "atrocités!" Mais depuis longtemps je m'en fiche, et vous aussi sans aucun doute. En effet ça ne doit pas vous déranger le moins du monde si les affaires marchent bien.

Cependant j'ai une bonne idée. Voulez-vous quitter la Belgique et devenir Pacha du Vilayet de Monastir? Je vous offre ça de bon cœur. Vous vous amusez très bien. Un peu de sévérité d'abord, et puis on ne vous dérange plus. Vous aurez une bonne petite armée, un palais très bien situé, et surtout un grand harem. Un harem! Pensez-y, mon cher. Rien de plus agréable.

Vous êtes allé à Berlin rendre visite à notre cher ami GUILLAUME. Avez-vous obtenu quelques petites concessions? Il faut toujours penser à ses petits bénéfices. Un peu de bakchisch, hein? Où est donc le docteur CARL PETERS? Je vous donne un bon conseil. Nommez-le Viceroy du Congo, car il sait gouverner les indigènes à merveille.

J'ai encore une petite idée. Pendant que les Russes se battent en Asie—avec qui que ce soit, ça m'est égal—je vais tâcher de tranquilliser le Vilayet de Monastir. J'ai un excellent système. Tout sera arrangé avant votre arrivée. Vous viendrez, j'en suis sûr, car vous ne ressemblez pas aux autres Giaours, qui m'agacent en poussant toujours leurs cris de Liberté, Égalité et Fraternité. Pour des Arméniens ou des Congolais, bismillah!

Votre tout dévoué, ABDUL.

Pourriez-vous me prêter cinquante mille francs?

MON CHER ABDUL.—Enchanté de recevoir votre lettre. Vous êtes si aimable, mon cher ami. Quelle triste chose que la vie! Chacun est rasta, ou snob, ou voyou, et il n'a qu'une idée, celle de vous dévaliser. C'est effroyable pour un homme aussi pauvre que moi.

Les affaires ne marchent pas du tout. Il y a si peu de caoutchouc, savez-vous, et il y a tant d'imbéciles qui s'occupent de cette petite industrie congolaise, et s'écrient contre ce qu'ils appellent "l'esclavage." En Belgique il y a des imbéciles qui détestent le jeu. Par conséquent mon petit terrain à Ostende ne rapporte rien. Les entreprises belges en Russie sont en baisse, ou en liquidation. Rien ne va plus. Et par dessus le marché on intente un procès contre moi à Bruxelles même.

Je voudrais bien me réfugier quelque part. Je deviendrais Roi de Macédoine très volontiers, savez-vous, mais le pays n'est pas assez tranquille. Je serais écrasé, comme le fruit dans une macédoine. Tout ce que je désire c'est la

C'est vrai que vous n'avez pas le Bosphore, mais vous devez avoir un lac quelque part dans votre parc. Mais on est rarement forcé d'aller aussi loin. Ordinairement une bonne bastonnade suffit.

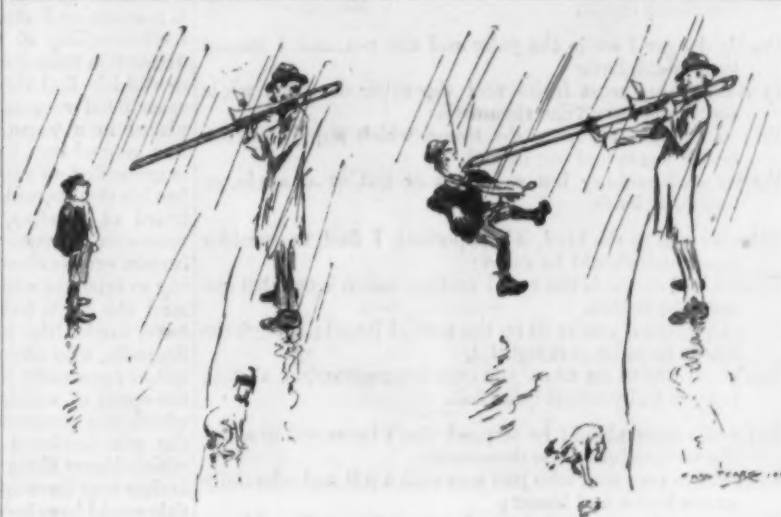
C'est dommage que vos affaires marchent si mal. Moi je n'ai pas le sou. Et cependant je tâche de faire quelques petites économies. J'ai une bonne idée. J'attendrai encore quelques mois, et puis j'achèterai tout ce qui reste de la flotte russe. C'est une chose qui me manque.

Si vous n'avez pas cinquante mille francs, voulez-vous me prêter vingt louis?

Votre tout dévoué,

ABDUL.

MON CHER ABDUL.—Je me sers d'une carte postale. Ça coûte moins cher. Vraiment je n'ai pas vingt louis à



IT IS THE UNEXPECTED THAT HAPPENS.

paix. Un petit nid sur la Côte d'Azur, un bon chef, un luxe de fleurs, et quelques petites femmes. Voilà tout! Avec dix millions de rentes je pourrais être parfaitement content.

Malheureusement il m'est impossible de vous prêter cinquante mille francs. Je suis presque à sec, et je n'aurai pas de quoi payer les frais de ce sacré procès. Mais, savez-vous, j'ai une proposition à vous faire. Voulez-vous acheter l'État du Congo? Je le vendrai très bon marché. Vous pourrez y exiler tous les Arméniens.

Votre ami sincère,

LÉOPOLD.

MON CHER LÉOPOLD.—Un procès contre le roi! C'est inouï. Si un Turc intentait un procès contre moi! Nous avons depuis longtemps notre petit système, pour ceux qui ne sont pas contents. Essayez-le. Envoyez chercher les plaignants, les témoins et les avocats, et faites apporter des sacs. Voilà votre affaire.

gaspiller. Mais si vous désirez du caoutchouc, j'en ai, savez-vous, et de première qualité. En gros je vous ferai même un petit rabais.

Tout à vous, LÉOPOLD.

From a local Bedford paper we learn that "Professor PHINEAS J. MURKS, of the New York Board of Health, argues that motoring is a cure for crime. . . . It is suggested that each resident of Dartmoor Prison or Holloway shall be allowed to take a daily spin on a 50-h.p. car. It is certain that if this plan prevailed many confirmed criminals would not be seen again in prison." *Mr. Punch* entirely agrees as to the practical certainty of their disappearance.

LITERARY GOSSIP.—Messrs. GREENING announce a new novel by Mr. WHITEING, a new edition of BROWNING, and a history of Reading.

THE GOLDEN MEAN.

[Mrs. EARLE has again been airing her views on diet in the *National Review*.]

In my Surrey retreat I have found it most sweet to devote
my seclusion and quiet
To devise the best course to grow strong as a horse by a
diligent study of diet,
And as so much depends for oneself and one's friends on the
kind of the food that one swallows
It has seemed to me best that the world be possessed of the
little *résumé* which follows:

Don't be tempted to eat of the poison called meat, but eschew
such insidious dishes;
If you're wise you will scowl at the whole *genus* fowl, and
avoid all descriptions of fishes;
Tea must never be had; coffee's equally bad; cocoa's worse,
for its action is quicker,
And of course I taboo any venomous brew which is known as
intoxicant liquor.

Deadly danger I see in the pulse and the pea, and I cannot
be over-emphatic
In condemning most fruits and the tuberous roots, while
asparagus makes one rheumatic;
Few and simple, say I, are the things which supply all our
bodily wants and our mental,
For we need nothing but a banana or nut, or an apple, an
orange or lentil.

Then, as well as the kind, it's important, I find, to consider
how much should be eaten:
To avoid all excess is the rule I profess, and it's one that can
never be beaten.
Do not gorge till you're ill on the nuts of Brazil; though the
lentils be ne'er so delightful,
Don't continue to eat when you once are replete, but abstain
ere you feel yourself quite full.

But while greed should be stopped don't be moved to adopt
the uncheerful ascetic demeanour;
I detest the poor soul who just toys with a roll and who daily
grows leaner and leaner;
Eat your nuts with delight and a sound appetite—I've a
liking for those who can grapple
With an extra Brazil or devour with a will a banana on top
of their apple.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

THERE is a pleasant flavour of good old-fashioned melo-
drama about Mr. MURRAY's latest novel, *V.O.* (CHATTO AND
WINDUS). Nine out of ten writers, having the story to tell, would
have found situation and local colour in the war in South
Africa. Mr. MURRAY goes back fifty years to the time of the
Crimean War, episodes of which he introduces in vivid
passages. The period thus remote, the stage is appropriately
trodden by the dishonest father; the gallant General, who,
having retired on a competency, is ruined by trusting the
villain; the proud impeccable son of the wicked father, who
loves the daughter of the ruined General and breaks away
from his home to take the Queen's shilling. It is an old old
story, in some of its particulars dating as far back as the
Newcomes. Mr. MURRAY tells it briskly, and no one taking
up the volume will be inclined to put it down till he reaches
the not-too-distant end. My Baronite finds the master touch
in the incident of the repudiated swindling father going out
to the Crimea and tenderly watching over the sick bed of
the wounded son who had renounced him.

In *David March* (METHUEN) Mr. FLETCHER shows trace of

the influence of Sir WALTER SCOTT, which my Baronite finds
refreshing after a long meal of novels of the day. He goes
back to the Stuart period, and skilfully fills his canvas with
characters that might well have peopled Cheapside at the
time, or dwelt in the leafy streets of country towns. Un-
fettered by modern conventionalities his men and women
walk with free and easy stride. The hero, a foundling
apprenticed to a village blacksmith, comes across the beautiful
daughter of a neighbouring squire. Straightway he falls in
love with her, which was not surprising even "somewhere
about the end of the month of May in the year 1683," as the
date is alluringly fixed. Where the marvel comes in is that
Cynthia Gervase, with equal suddenness and completeness,
falls in love with the grimy blacksmith, sticks to him through
thick and thin, marries, and lives happily ever after.
Historical characters, King CHARLES, Judge JEFFREYS, and
CHRISTOPHER WREN among them, flit through pages aglow
with life and colour.

A Maid of Mystery, by L. T. MEADE (F. V. WHITE & Co.),
is a sensational romance that the Baron has no hesitation in
recommending to the attention of all those who, seeking
distraction from the cares and troubles of this extra-ordinary
mortal life, find their haven of rest in perusing an absorbing
sensational romance, as they sit in an old arm-chair cosily
placed in a warm corner. So far in praise of this story
in a general way, but the Baron, as he must needs be critical,
is compelled to admit that as to the originality of the idea he
has his doubts, unless of course the author has never read or
heard of *Pauline*, by ALEXANDRE DUMAS, one of the best
romances ever written, to which this present work bears a
certain very evident resemblance. Again, the Baron, unwilling
to interfere with the pleasure of those who have not yet
read the book, but representing the curiosity of those who
have, would like to be informed, *First*, who was *Ishmael*?
Secondly, who attempted the crime which, had it succeeded,
would apparently have been a blunder? *Thirdly*, what was
the secret of which *Nurse Elton* was all along in possession,
which she promised to reveal at the right moment, which
she was implored by the heroine to discover to her, but
which *Nurse Elton* kept so strictly to herself that even the
author may have merely a suspicion of its character? The
title would have been more to the point if, instead of *The Maid
of Mystery*, it had been called *The Nurse-maid of Mystery*.

Cherry's Child (F. V. WHITE), by JOHN STRANGE WINTER, is
a puzzling story,—that is, to a mere man. By the superior
sex in petticoats it will be appreciated at its full value.
Putting aside *Bootsie's Baby*, as one separates *Pickwick*
from all DICKENS's other works, this is, in the Baron's opinion,
the best of Mrs. STANNARD's many novels. It is difficult
to understand the heroine or the two heroes,—which terms
are merely conventional as indicating the principal characters
of this story. And for this very
reason, therefore, it is life-like,
and, being so, the wayward
conduct of the trio is, though interest-
ing, most irritating. Of dramatic
situations there are none: but the
dialogue is that of epigrammatic
comedy, except when it necessa-
rily drops into the merely ordinary.
It will interest the "spindle-side,"
but the "spear-side" will probably
be disappointed. The story is spun
out, and the material becomes
rather thin in the process.

WHAT WE OFTEN HEAR OF BUT VERY SELDOM SEE.—"A perfectly
clean sweep."

